

11.0

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Introduction

Intergovernmental cooperation involves working with neighboring communities and agencies to understand how their future planning activities will impact the City of Evansville. At a minimum, this involves sharing information about Evansville's plan with neighboring communities and agencies and vice versa. However, Evansville believes intergovernmental cooperation should not end with the sharing of plans. Instead, this process should be the beginning for joint planning and decision-making, conflict resolution, and other strategies to promote regional coordination.



The Comprehensive Planning Law requires that the City of Evansville coordinate with:

- Town of Union
- Rock County
- Evansville Community School District
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

To provide for broader communication with area governments and agencies, in its *Public Participation Plan*, Evansville identified the following additional governments, agencies, commissions and boards as those with whom the City would seek to coordinate:

- Evansville School Board
- Town of Magnolia
- Town of Center
- Town of Porter
- Rock County Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 8 and 9)
- Rock County Planning Commission

In addition, during the planning process, the City extended efforts to coordinate with the Town of Brooklyn (Green County).

Intergovernmental Cooperation Vision

By 2025, intergovernmental cooperation efforts have enabled Evansville to establish partnerships with neighboring communities, state agencies, Rock County, and the Evansville Community School District to provide coordinated, cost-effective services. Annexations are planned, based on service demands, in a fashion to sustain the growth needs of the City and protect the rural character of surrounding communities.

Existing Intergovernmental Activities and Partners

Many intergovernmental programs already in effect impact the City of Evansville. This section highlights programs that are currently in place.

ADJACENT/NEARBY GOVERNMENTAL UNITS

- Towns of Union, Magnolia, Center, Porter (Rock County)
- Town of Brooklyn (Green County)

The Town of Union surrounds the City of Evansville. As such, the City has the most direct interaction with the Town of Union. Evansville and Union coordinate with one another to provide fire protection service and emergency medical service through the Evansville Community Fire District and the EMS service area. Recently, the Town and City have also reached an agreement for the City's Police Department to patrol around the new Evansville High School. The school is located in the City, but one of the driveways into the school enters from the Town of Union on a township road. Through the agreement, the City Police can also patrol this area in the Town.

In the past, the City had extra-territorial zoning that extended into the Town of Union. An opportunity exists to re-establish extra-territorial zoning to encourage growth in the City that will utilize municipal services, versus rural development that will have a greater impact on farmland and surrounding rural character. From time to time Evansville annexes property from Union to accommodate development requests that require municipal water and sewer. This situation sometimes strains the relationship between Evansville and Union.

Evansville's relationship with all other neighboring towns and villages can be characterized as one of mutual respect and compatibility from a land use and political standpoint. Because no other community shares a boundary with Evansville, other boundary disputes are non-existent. The Town of Magnolia, part of the Town of Porter, a portion of the Town of Brooklyn, as well as the Town of Union, participate in the Fire District and EMS service area. (A more detailed description of this service, including equipment, response times and similar information is provided in the Utilities and Community Facilities Element.) These multi-jurisdictional efforts provide excellent service for the area. However, there are issues to be resolved with respect to making representation on the Fire District Board proportional to the funding provided by each jurisdiction and the insufficient contribution from the Fire District to the City of Evansville fire protection infrastructure.

Communities around Evansville share a common rural character, with a strong farming tradition. Residents of nearby communities enjoy access to Evansville's parks, library, businesses and attend Evansville Community Schools. As a result, Evansville is an important destination point for residents of surrounding rural communities.

At this time, surrounding communities manage their own public service programs (e.g., road maintenance and construction, garbage collection, snowplowing). However, as mutually beneficial opportunities for shared service contracts arise, the City of Evansville is open to considering these options.

SCHOOL DISTRICT

The City's relationship with the Evansville Community School District can be characterized as cooperative. The City appreciates the quality service provided by the school district and the fact that

the schools are a major draw to the area for new residents. Regular and open communication is critical to ensure that this cooperative relationship will continue and be strengthened as growth continues.

With respect to intergovernmental cooperation, several opportunities were identified during the planning effort to strengthen relations between the City of Evansville and the Evansville Community School District. Through intergovernmental efforts, it is believed that operating efficiencies of both the City and the school district can be improved and additional services can be made available to area residents. Specific goals and objectives are included later in this chapter to help realize several of these opportunities.

ROCK COUNTY

The City of Evansville is located in Rock County. Rock County provides many programs, services, and facilities (e.g., parks) that are available to Evansville residents. Rock County programs that most directly impact Evansville include:

- County highway maintenance and improvement programs;
- Library funding support (to help cover the costs of county residents who use the library); and
- Social services.

Evansville also contracts with Rock County to utilize one of its planners as the City's staff planner. This arrangement helps to ensure that Rock County is aware of growth and development issues and opportunities that are occurring in the City.

Unfortunately, most County services and programs are concentrated in Janesville and Beloit. Access to these services is challenging to Evansville residents in need, particularly those residents that cannot drive. This situation supports the perception that Rock County focuses its attention on Janesville and Beloit. Evansville encourages the County to consider opportunities to open satellite offices, additional outreach programs, and improve transportation access.

In those areas where Rock County has jurisdiction, the County attempts to get input from the City before making decisions affecting the City. Likewise, the City has attempted to maintain communication with Rock County by providing recommendations. During the planning process, additional communication with the County was identified as a priority, particularly with respect to County road improvement projects. Future communication will also be especially important as it relates to:

- Stormwater management
- Coordination with the Rock County Comprehensive Plan
- Economic development
- Public safety

STATE AGENCIES

- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)
- Wisconsin State Historical Society

WDNR and WisDOT are the primary state agencies with whom Evansville must coordinate to achieve the goals and objectives of this plan. Given the size of the historic district in the City, as well as

The activities of the WDNR are discussed further in the *Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element* of this plan. Additional information is also available on-line at: www.dnr.state.wi.us.

funding opportunities that are available, the Wisconsin State Historical Society is also an important partner in planning. More information about the programs and services available through the Wisconsin State Historical Society is included in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter.

WDNR takes a lead role in wildlife protection and the sustainable management of woodlands, stormwater regulations, wetlands and other natural wildlife habitat areas. Management of the hunting lands located immediately south of the City is also an important area for cooperation between the City and the WDNR.

WisDOT is a key player in the planning and development of highways and pedestrian/cycling facilities in the City and region. Evansville has a very good relationship with WisDOT, as was most recently demonstrated by effective coordination in planning for the reconstruction of USH 14 in 2005.

During the planning process, WisDOT indicated that it wanted even more opportunities to coordinate with the City to better anticipate the impacts of development on state highway corridors. Goals and objectives are provided at the end of this chapter to support that request. Open communication and participation in land use and transportation decisions that impact the City will remain important priorities for intergovernmental cooperation.



For additional information about WisDOT activities in the City of Evansville, refer to the *Transportation Element* of this plan. Additional information is also available on-line at: www.dot.state.wi.us

Intergovernmental Comprehensive Planning Process

Before officially beginning development of this plan, the City hosted a meeting in May of 2003 with area Town Chairs to discuss Smart Growth Planning. The purpose of the meeting was to find out if area towns had an interest in working together with Evansville to develop a single plan. At that time, the Towns of Union and Magnolia decided it would be best to work independently to build from their existing planning documents and work on their own schedule. The Towns of Center and Porter had already committed to working with surrounding communities, including the Village of Footville, on a multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plan.

To facilitate a planning environment open to intergovernmental cooperation, Evansville sent adjacent municipalities, the WDNR, WDOT, the Evansville Community School District, and Rock County an invitation to participate in an intergovernmental meeting held in October of 2003. The purpose of this meeting was to:

- Notify all involved of the City's planning effort at an early point in the program so intergovernmental cooperation opportunities could be an integral part of the plan;
- Learn about existing plans developed by these agencies and communities that may impact Evansville; and
- Discuss intergovernmental successes, challenges and opportunities.

Following this meeting, a draft of this chapter was created and forwarded to all invited participants for their review and comment. This information was then consolidated into a revised draft of this chapter that was forwarded to the Evansville Smart Growth Planning Committee for review and final changes.

On an element-by-element basis, the City (through its consultant) also contacted Rock County officials, local school district representatives, neighboring communities, and state agencies to complete inventories of available services, facilities and programs. For example, during the development of the *Transportation Element*, WisDOT was contacted to obtain information available related to transportation facilities and programs in the City of Evansville. Likewise, WisDOT was provided a preliminary copy of the *Transportation Element* to review and comment upon. This same courtesy was extended to the WDNR during development of the *Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element*. Similarly, the school district was an important resource during development of the *Utilities and Community Facilities Element*.

Throughout the plan development process, the City also coordinated with Rock County to obtain plan-mapping resources.

More than 30 days prior to the public hearing, all intergovernmental agencies/communities were provided a copy of the Recommended Plan and asked to provide comments, as is required by state statutes. Comments received were addressed at the Public Hearing and in the Final Adopted Plan.

Existing and Proposed Plans

ADJACENT/NEARBY GOVERNMENTAL UNITS

There are no adjacent or nearby governmental units that have adopted Smart Growth Comprehensive Plans. However, a great deal of planning is underway.

In 2003, Town of Union began organizing itself to prepare a comprehensive plan. Their process was designed to follow the City's effort to efficiently utilize information developed during the City's planning program. Union will likely complete its plan in 2005. The City of Evansville would like to work closely with Union as the Town develops its plan. Given that Union surrounds Evansville, coordination and communication is of utmost importance to ensure that both plans are compatible, consistent and implemented successfully.

The Towns of Center and Porter also started a planning effort in 2003. They are working together with the Towns of Avon, Newark, Plymouth and Spring Valley, as well as the Village of Footville, on a multi-jurisdictional plan. A private consulting firm is facilitating this program.

The Town of Magnolia began working with planners from Rock County in 2003, to organize itself for developing its plan. This effort involved preparing existing land use maps and identifying issues to be addressed in the plan. The Town of Magnolia will likely begin working on its plan in 2004.

During the planning effort, the Town and Village of Brooklyn (Green County) were also contacted as area intergovernmental partners that coordinate with Evansville. The Town of Brooklyn is working with several surrounding towns in Green County on a multi-jurisdictional plan. The Village of Brooklyn is also initiating a plan.

To ensure compatibility with the goals and objectives of this plan, Evansville will continue to participate in the planning efforts of its neighboring communities as opportunities arise.

EVANSVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Evansville Community School District has a long history of planning for improvements and expansion in response to the City's growth rate. The district has built facilities to accommodate a significant number of new students coming to the district. Whereas other districts build facilities to accommodate existing student populations, or perhaps projections spanning five to ten years in the future, the Evansville Community School District has built facilities to accommodate anticipated growth over the next several years.

District officials anticipate, given growth projections it is likely that the district will need to build an additional school at some time in the future. Since the district boundaries extend well beyond Evansville, it is possible that the school may be constructed beyond the city limits. During this planning process, efforts were made to closely coordinate with the school district to consider future school locations. To help ensure effective coordination throughout the plan development process, the Evansville Community School District Administrator served as a member of the City of Evansville Smart Growth Planning Committee. Additional information about school district facilities is provided in the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter.

ROCK COUNTY

Rock County has not initiated its comprehensive planning process. As a local unit of government, the City of Evansville will participate in any county planning effort to provide information about this plan, including local goals, objectives, policies and visions for the future.

There are many other plan documents that the County has prepared that were reviewed in order to develop this plan. These documents include: *Rock County Park, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan*, *Rock County Land and Water Conservation Plan*, and others. Information from these documents is profiled in the corresponding element chapter of this plan. For example, pertinent recommendations from the *Rock County Park, Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan* are highlighted in the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter and Transportation Chapter (related to trails).

STATE AGENCIES

The WDNR maintains property management plans, including a plan for the land owned on the south side of the City. This document was used as a reference when developing the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter, as well as, the Land Use Chapter of this plan.

In recent years, WisDOT has completed a series of statewide planning documents for use in the development of local comprehensive plans. These documents include plans for the state highway corridors, bicycle corridors, rail corridors, and air transportation. These plans were used as an important reference when preparing the Transportation Chapter of this plan. Furthermore, WisDOT's 6-Year Capital Improvement Plan was used for identifying immediate projects in the City of Evansville and surrounding areas.

Human Infrastructure to Support City Success

Historically, as a relatively small City, Evansville has been able to function very well with a limited number of staff. However, as the City's population continues to grow, additional staff will be needed to meet the needs of a growing community. The addition of staff should be carefully considered as part of a larger organization structure designed to meet resident, economic, and intergovernmental challenges.

By the time the City's population reaches 6,000 persons, additional full-time professional staff dedicated specifically to: zoning enforcement, building inspection and economic development should become part of the City's professional staff. It may also become more cost effective for the City to hire a full-time planner and engineer, rather than continue to contract these services. Likewise, as demand for recreation opportunities rise, the City should also consider hiring a full-time parks and recreation coordinator, or at least a part-time professional that is shared with the school district.

Similarly, issues of providing adequate space for government to function is also an issue that will impact the City's ability to coordinate well with neighboring communities and provide needed services for residents. This issue is addressed in the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter.

Intergovernmental Goals, Objectives and Policy

The goals, objectives and policies provided generally seek to enhance the lines of communication between area governments. This approach will help to create an environment where cooperation is possible and conflicts are minimized. Goals and supporting objectives are provided in Chapter 12. Below is the City's policy statement.

POLICY

The City of Evansville will seek to cooperate with all neighboring municipalities, the county, state agencies, and school district for mutual benefit.